

Appl. No. 09/971,097

Amdt. Dated 11/7/2005

Response to Office Action Dated 10/28/2005

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 5-6, 12-14, 16-19, 24-25, 30, 33-35, 37-39, 41, 46-52, 55-57, 59-61, 63, 68-74 would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. This has been done, and all of the rejected claims have been canceled. No new matter has been added. Therefore, the application is now in a condition for allowance.

The Examiner is also thanked for accepting the formal drawings and entering the amendments to the specification and abstract.

Disclaimers Relating to Prosecution History Estoppel

Claims 1-4, 7-11, 15, 20-23, 26-29, 31-32, 36, 40, 42-45, 53-54, 58, 62 and 64-67 have been canceled notwithstanding the belief that these claims were allowable over the cited art. These claims have been canceled solely for the purpose of expediting the patent application process, and the amendments were not necessary for patentability.

In this regard, a continuation application is being prepared with and/or based upon the canceled claims. The Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 7-11, 15, 20-23, 26-29, 31-32, 36, 40, 42-45, 53-54, 58, 62 and 64-67 as obvious from a combination of references. That rejection will be addressed in the preliminary amendment.

Claims 26-29 were rejected as duplicates of claims 20-23. The undersigned concedes the propriety of the rejection and apologizes to the Examiner for the inconvenience of addressing the error.

Conclusion

It is submitted, however, that the independent and dependent claims include other significant and substantial recitations which are not disclosed in the cited references. Thus, the claims are also

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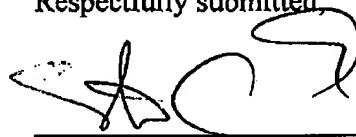
patentable for additional reasons. However, for economy the additional grounds for patentability are not set forth here.

In view of all of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested and allowance at an early date is solicited.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney to answer any questions or to discuss steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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